

LARIMER COUNTY | BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

P.O. Box 1190, Fort Collins, Colorado 80522-1190, 970.498.5700, Larimer.gov

Environmental and Science Advisory Board MINUTES

Date: May 12, 2026

Time: 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Location: 200 W Oak St, Fort Collins, CO 80521 or virtually

Contact: Heidi Pruess, pruesshb@co.larimer.co.us , 970-498-7138

MEMBERS		STAFF		GUESTS
Rodger Ames	X	John Kefalas *	X	Tony J Van Goor
Tasha Carr - Chair	X	Heidi Pruess †	X	
Anna Cloud		Scott Benton	X	
Jeremy Cooper		Lea Schneider	X	
Leo Grassens - Vice Chair	X			
Matthew Haag	V			
Azmal Hossan	X			
Kathryn Inman	V			
Joe Izaguirre III	X			
Michael Lee Jones	X			
Jared McGlothlin				
Nicole Poncelet-Johnson				
Cathelyne Powers				
Chris Wood	X			

X = present; v= present virtually; * = Commissioner Liaison; † = ESAB Liaison; ‡=Youth.

Call to Order: 6:00 p.m.

- **Introduction of members, staff and guests**
- **Commissioner's Update**

Commissioner Kefalas shared the following updates:

- Legislative Session is complete. Data center bills did not move forward this session. Conservation Easement Tax Credit bill will pass and will provide incentives to land owners.
- Clean Air Month proclamation and presentation was provided on May 12, 2026 during the Administrative Matters meeting.



- A Natural Resources update during the May 11, 2026 worksession included a report from Northern Water on the Chimney Hollow Reservoir and the uranium contamination.
- July remains the target opening date for the County Landfill in Wellington. The current landfill will be closed and serve as a transfer and recycling station. A pilot program for food waste composting and anaerobic digestion is expected to be initiated along with the recycling program at the current landfill.

- **Discussion Items -**

- Data Center Updates : Presentation by Scott Benton/Community Development
 - Current moratorium on new data centers in Larimer County ends August 25, 2026
 - Public survey regarding data centers is currently available, closing on June 12, 2026
 - Considering special review process for data center use and retaining 1041 for power generation and transmission that may be aspects of a data center
 - Review criteria were discussed, including the legal mechanisms to enact those criteria and mention was made that the size of large and very large data centers would be outside what the County is traditionally accustomed to reviewing.
 - SB102 proposed to address over 30MW thus the final approach by the County should include consideration of potential definitions by others, including Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, [Southwest Power Pool](#), and other utility definitions. The final criteria for size of data centers by definition could consider potential impacts. High Impact Loads start at 45MW for the utilities but not all facilities using this much energy are performing data center functions. (Tri-State has their high-impact application into FERC and is awaiting determination.) Conversely, knowing how much of a load office buildings or other current facilities are using may help determine the small scale sites.
 - Community/Economic Agreements are a wildcard for impact criteria development. Some jurisdictions have created Economic Betterment Funds as part of negotiations for permitting. Larimer County is limited in what can be done regarding tax incentives.
 - Reporting requirements will be important for compliance. Decommissioning requirements are viewed as important by staff.
 - How are data center services going to be used locally? Co-located facilities allow renting of the facilities to any organization and therefore the services may not solely provide services to local residents as they could service statewide, nationwide, or even world wide data service needs.
 - Options for the level of review Larimer County could require were reviewed. Some basic work would have to be done to update the Land Use Code. Weighing the benefits and costs is important.
 - Questions to the ESAB and other Advisory Boards were presented. Staff are requesting comments understanding the need to ask the BCC for another six month extension of the moratorium (a June Board of County Commissioner worksession regarding data centers is expected):
 - Definition - [Southwest Power Pool](#) is the regional transmission entity and therefore there are planning and resource adequacy are defined by them and should be referenced.



- Size thresholds - Discussion included reliability of the energy grid and priority during utility constraints (even with diesel generators as a back-up there are air quality permitting constraints); cost to rate payers; requiring renewable energy sources
- Locations or zone district options for impact criteria - the number of acres of light and heavy industrial zoning in Larimer County would be useful to know. The [County's current zoning map](#) is available for review, recognizing that zoning maps can be changed.
- Water use was discussed. Closed loop systems for water conservation (one example provided included: 200 million gallons for 3MW required for the initial fill, regular maintenance would also require disposal of this contaminated water and then refilling).
 - No table top exercise has been completed to attempt to understand what resources would be available for any size data center. The original KODAK campus was a 30MW facility so it may be useful to study (annually used 4-6 acre feet). The cumulative impacts would be important to understand.
- Additional resources, including the graduate student study and other resources, will be provided by staff for future ESAB deliberations. Currently there are no known ordinances that could drive a self-sustaining very large/high impact data center.
- For the June breakout session :
 - DBA vs DBC measurements for noise is something to consider updating in the County Ordinance No 97-03 to capture the low frequency noise
 - Wildlife habitat (article 4.4 and 4.6 of the existing land use code) and potential heat impacts;
 - Water consumption and electricity consumption;
 - Air quality, public health, and placement of data centers, and other nuisance issues that are only regulated by local requirements;
 - Long-term securities (decommissioning and financial, specifically regarding hazardous waste);
 - Compliance and monitoring;
 - Impacts if all data centers go to areas with little or no requirements.
- Annual ESAB Report
 - Clarification of sub-committee reports was discussed. These reports will be attached to the report in the Appendix.
 - Minor edits were provided and it was agreed to send this report to the Board of County Commissioners.
- 2026-2027 Workplan recommendations were discussed. The recommended topics from the ESAB will be forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners for review, comment, and approval.
- **Approval of Minutes**
 - Draft April 2026
 - Motion to approve the April minutes was made by Leo Grassens, motion was seconded by Joe Izaguirre, all in favor.
- **Updates and Round Table**



- [Data Center Public Survey](#) is open until June 12
 - Front Range Sustainability Meeting May 13 - in Superior, CO and Leo Grassens will be attending
 - Intermountain West Ozone Exchange - Oct 26-28 in Loveland. Virtual Town Halls to learn more about this event will be held May 15 and June 3, register at nfrmpo.org/air-quality/ozone-exchange/
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- **Agenda Topics for Future Meetings** – The June meeting will be a working session to discuss feedback on data centers. June 22 event with the County Commissioners for the Environmental Stewardship Award Ceremony. The July ESAB meeting will include: New Member welcome and training and review of new workplan.
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- **Adjourn** – The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.